

# **I-15 Environmental Study**

Project # IM-0005(138)

Key # 9000

## **Second Public Meeting Summary**

### **Meeting Date, Time and Location**

June 27, 2006 (4-7:30 p.m.) – Portneuf District Library, 5210 Stuart Ave., Chubbuck, Idaho

### **Staff Attendance**

Mark Snyder (ITD D5)

Judy Harmon (ITD D5)

Scott Ellsworth (CH2M)

Kurt Wald (CH2M)

Lynda Friesz-Martin (LFPR)

Gwen Smith (ITD PA)

Blake Rindlisbacher (ITD D5)

Ryan Walz (ITD D5)

Brian Michels (CH2M)

Amy Elliot (CH2M)

Brandon Coates (LFPR)

Jennifer Theisen (Bionomics)

Idaho Transportation Department District 5 (ITD D5)

Idaho Transportation Department Public Affairs (ITD PA)

Lynda Friesz Public Relations (LFPR)

CH2M HILL (CH2M)

Bionomics (Bionomics)

### **Meeting Attendance**

A total of 52 people attended the public meeting.

### **Meeting Overview**

A Public Open House Meeting was held June 27, 2006 at the Portneuf District Library, 5210 Stuart Ave., Chubbuck, Idaho. The purpose of the meeting was to gather public input, identify issues, and find out what is important to the community as we consider roadway improvements to I-15 in the northern Pocatello and Chubbuck Area.

Two (2) presentations providing the project's purpose, history, process and progress were provided at the meeting. Following the presentations the meeting was conducted in an open house format. Several project displays were set up to provide project information to the public and to gather their input. Displays and a brochure provided information about the progress of the project, the environmental issues we are studying and how we measure impacts, interchange justification process, preliminary concepts and concepts carried forward in the process. A project issues display area was set up to identify project issues that need to be addressed in the Environmental Document. The five concepts carried forward to the meeting were: Concept 11 (Chubbuck Road), Concept 16 (Chubbuck Road), Concept 12c (2 ½ Mile Road), Concept 13 (Tyhee Road) and Concept 14 (Siphon Road). Concepts not carried forward were also displayed at the meeting. A comment form/questionnaire was handed out to gather comments on which alternative(s) should be carried forward in the environmental process and to identify any issues that may change the results of the Level 2 Screening Report.

## **Open House Meeting Public Involvement Schedule**

May 22, 2006	Meeting announcement posted on ITD web site
May 26, 2006	Postcard mailed to stakeholders announcing meeting time and location
June 6, 2006	Newspaper ad appeared in the Idaho State Journal announcing the open house meeting time and location
June 11, 2006	Newspaper ad appeared in the Idaho State Journal announcing the open house meeting time and location
June 18, 2006	Newspaper ad appeared in the Idaho State Journal announcing the open house meeting time and location
June 23, 2006	News release sent to local media
June 25, 2006	Newspaper ad appeared in the Idaho State Journal announcing the open house meeting time and location
June 27, 2006	Brochure handed out at open house meeting
June 27, 2006	Open House Public Meeting held at Portneuf District Library in Chubbuck, Idaho
July 12, 2006	Public comment period ended

## **Project Mailings, Meeting Announcements and the Stakeholder List**

Project mailings were distributed to stakeholders near the project area through a zip-code mail drop in the Pocatello and Chubbuck area. The zip-code mailing list was combined with the project stakeholder list which included city, county and state officials, state and federal agencies, interested citizens, media and previous stakeholders from the Chubbuck to Pocatello Creek project. The stakeholder list grows throughout the project as additional stakeholders request to be included and property owners are identified. A total of two-hundred eighty (280) stakeholders from the stakeholder list were included in the mailings.

A postcard was distributed to stakeholders prior to the open house meeting. A total of 7,377 addresses were included in the postcard mailing.

## **Newspaper Advertisements and News Releases**

Four (4) newspaper advertisements announcing the open house meeting time and location were placed in the Idaho State Journal starting twenty-one (21) days prior to the meeting and included three (3) consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting. The Idaho Transportation Department's Public Affairs Office distributed a news release to the local media outlets in Pocatello/Chubbuck area encouraging participation at the meeting and media coverage.

## Summary of Written Comments

Comments were collected from June 27, 2006 through July 12, 2006. Twenty – five (20) written comment forms regarding the project were collected at the open house. All of the comments received at the meeting or through the mail are included in this summary. A total of twenty-five (25) stakeholders submitted comments. Numerous comments, issues and concerns regarding the project were expressed in each comment form. The following bullet points highlight the issues and concerns expressed in each comment form. The comment forms have been transcribed as closely to the respondent's original words as possible. Names and addresses of the respondent have been removed.

Overall Siphon Road (Concept 14) received the majority public support however there were several concerns with removing or replacing the siphon that runs under the roadway. Tyhee Road (Concept 13) was the 2<sup>nd</sup> favorite choice of the public. Several meeting participants commented that they preferred Tyhee Road over Siphon Road due to concerns about the siphon. 2 ½ Mile Road (Concept 12c) was the only other concept that received any support. The Bench Road extension on the modified concepts also received support.

## Summarized Comments, Issues and Concerns about the Project

*What issues or concerns do you have that may change the results of the Level 2 Screening Report? Do you have other issues or concerns ITD should address as we complete the Environmental Study?*

### Siphon Road (Concept 14)

- Siphon Road is the only east/west road to cross the Portneuf River into Power County
- The siphon leaks and needs to be replaced
- Replacing the siphon should not be an expense for the Fort Hall Water Project
- Considered moving Siphon Road to the north to avoid buildings and the siphon pipe
- Coordination with the tribes over the siphon pipe will cause delays in the project
- Potential conflict with Siphon Road Interchange where traffic exiting I-15 to I-86 would merge with Pocatello Creek Road Traffic going on to I-86 from the collector lanes

### Chubbuck Road Concepts

- Chubbuck Road bridges are deteriorating and should be addressed
- Chubbuck Road is too close to the Pocatello Creek Road Exit and the WYE Connector

### Other Issues or Concerns

- Extend Bench Road and upgrade Hi Line Road
- Need an interchange at Philbin Road
- Philbin Road is further west, not many homes mostly farmland
- An interchange outside of the city impact areas would cause development that is not in line with either Pocatello or Chubbuck Development Plans
- Losing too much farmland
- Don't bulldoze our mountains
- Can you go underground
- Need to drastically change the values for noise, safety and impact on known resources

- Address the evaluation matrix section under Route Circulation (transportation benefits) that shows Siphon Road is the “most” effective concept but Tyhee Road is the “least” effective
- Consider future development impacts associated with a North Bannock County Sewer, contact Steve Smart

*Which of these Interchange “Build” Concepts best fit the Purpose and Need of the project? Chubbuck Road (Concept 11) \_\_\_\_ 2 ½ Mile Road (Concept 12c) \_\_\_\_ Tyhee Road (Concept 13) \_\_\_\_ Siphon Road (Concept 14) \_\_\_\_ Chubbuck Road (Concept 16) \_\_\_\_ “No Build” Concept \_\_\_\_ (improvements would not be made)*

- Chubbuck Road Concept 11 (0)
- 2 ½ Mile Road Concept 12c (3)
- Tyhee Road Concept 13 (6)
- Siphon Road Concept 14 (13)
- Chubbuck Road Concept 16 (0)
- No Build Concept (0)

*What makes the leading concept(s) stand out from the others for meeting the purpose and need? Of the options not selected, what removed them from your consideration for meeting the purpose and need?*

#### Siphon Road (Concept 14)

- I live on 2 ½ Mile Road, its nice & peaceful and I like to keep it that way (*chose Siphon*)
- Siphon Road doesn’t have a lot of existing housing and buildings; Chubbuck Road is already busy and Tyhee has residential; (*chose Siphon*)
- Siphon addresses long-term traffic concerns and development will easily access the infrastructure the concept will create
- Vehicles originating from the residential area east of I-15, wishing to travel west and south are more likely to use Siphon Road Concept than traveling further north to the other concepts
- Siphon Road is the best choice because it blends the best with the current growth pattern and developments towards the north of Pocatello and Chubbuck; Tyhee Road is the 2<sup>nd</sup> best choice but it would not pick up as much of the traffic growth as the Siphon Road Concept; 2 ½ Mile Road is too far from the population growth; Chubbuck Road choices would put too much traffic on Chubbuck Road causing congestion
- Need to make Siphon Road a priority so the land is not sold for development and lost
- Need to include sewer system that serves the Tyhee/Fort Hall area in the Siphon Road Concept
- Siphon Road is preferred because it is farmland and has virtually no environmental concerns
- Siphon Road will disrupt our farming and irrigation system the least
- Siphon Road is far enough north that the WYE interchange can be upgraded

#### Tyhee Road (Concept 13)

- Tyhee Road is best because is moves traffic farthest from the WYE and Chubbuck Road, feeds traffic to Yellowstone Highway, and adjacent land is zoned and building light industrial; Siphon Road would also serve these reasons except the irrigation siphon would be difficult to maintain and negotiate with the Bureau of Indian Affairs

- Tyhee Road Concept is the most favorable considering the large housing area (1200 homes) proposed for north of 2 ½ Mile Road
- Prefer Tyhee and Siphon Roads because of the scoring on the evaluation matrix
- Tyhee Road has several concerns that need to be addressed including:
  - Simplot Waste Water Pond (north east)
  - Geothermal Wells (north west)
  - Underground Spring (west of location)
  - Irrigation Well (west of location)
  - New Proposed and Platted Housing Sub Division (north west)
  - Houses to be removed (west of location)
  - Too far north of the city limits to be effective for any future growth over the next 30 to 50 years

#### 2 ½ Mile Road (Concept 12c)

- 2 ½ Mile Road is the least developed now, therefore the purchase price of land needed would be the least, even in 5-10 years when this is built
- 2 ½ Mile Road makes the most sense, it is half-way between the other highway intersects (interchanges)
- 2 ½ Mile Road has several concerns that need to be addressed including:
  - Simplot Waste Water Pond (south east)
  - Radio Tower (north east)
  - Slurry Pipeline (south and west to Tyhee Road)
  - Geothermal Wells (south and west)
  - Abandoned Well (south and west)
  - New Platted Housing Development (south and west)
  - Existing Housing Development (west of I-15 and south of 2 ½ Mile)
  - Too far north of the city limits to be effective for any future growth over the next 30 to 50 years

#### **Transcribed Comments**

1. Denise Jensen – I believe that putting the interchange in at Siphon is a better idea. Less problems involved with that road. It will alleviate the congestion that's on Chubbuck Rd.
2. James W. Woodlard – I think the interchange needs to be north at least to Tyhee Road if it were extended east but the road needs to go diagonal to Siphon Road. That is the only east/west road to cross the Portneuf River in to Power County. The siphon leaks & needs to be replaced. It makes no sense to not extend bench road and upgrade Hi Line Road. The next thing that needs to happen is an interchange at Philbin Road. You can wait until we have gridlock in the north end of the valley or do it now. Chubbuck & Yellowstone to the I-86 interchange and beyond is a disaster zone now. What will it be in 5 to 7 years when you get ready to do something? Concept 11 is the worst one; 12c or 13 with the road going across to Siphon best; you have to do Bench Road.
3. Wendy Marlatt – Bench Rd. I live on 2 ½ Mile. It's nice & peaceful & I like to keep it that way.
4. Rick Mabey – (chose Siphon Road Concept 14)
5. Danielle Mabey – Siphon Rd. doesn't have a lot of existing housing & buildings. Chubbuck Road is already busy and Tyhee has residential. Siphon is also in the middle of the 2 areas that are being looked at.
6. Anonymous – The main concern with this system of freeway is that the possibility of ever having an interchange at Chubbuck Road the time to do an interchange at Chubbuck Road was before the pump station and new development.

7. Angela M. Archuleta – It seems to me that the 2 ½ (*Mile Road*) would make more sense to me. It seems that this would be the ½ & ½ mark between the other highway intersects (interchanges).
8. Dan Rainey – The option that appears to relieve congestion best would be the Siphon Road Interchange with I-15 collector lanes. The area of concern for this option is a potential conflict where traffic exiting I-15 to I-86 would merge with Pocatello Creek Road traffic going on to I-86 from the collector lanes. This could be mitigated by having the I-15 exit lane join a single lane from Pocatello Creek Road making two lanes joining the traffic from I-15 Southbound. Additionally, big concern is Chubbuck Road deteriorating bridges. These should be replaced. Concerns with other options: Chubbuck Road is too close to the Pocatello Creek Road exit and the WYE Connector. This option would result in some confusion to motorists. Additionally, Chubbuck Road would be very difficult to widen to handle enough traffic an interchange would create. The other options are too far north and are outside of city impact areas. Development an interchange would cause in these areas would not be in line with either the Pocatello or Chubbuck Development Plans. Siphon Road option seems to address long-term traffic concerns. As development occurs in these areas it will easily be able to access the infrastructure the Siphon Road Concept would create. The items I would eliminate were eliminated due to being too far away from current development (2 ½ Mile/Tyhee) or from confusion that could be created due to proximity to existing interchanges (Chubbuck Road options). Additionally, the Chubbuck options do not address long-term development of the area. While either of the Chubbuck options would address current traffic issues, a development occurred north of the Chubbuck Road in the next few years.
9. Brad Bassett – My biggest issue with the Chubbuck Road is with the congestion. I honestly feel that with the long-term growth projections, Siphon or Tyhee are the best places for this project.
10. Siphon Rd. has schools, many children, homes, and the farmland is being developed. We are losing too much farmland, we need to eat. We also don't want our mountains bulldozed down. Philbin Road is further west, not much homes, except east of Philbin. Mostly farmland west of Philbin. Why not go underground? If I had to choose it would be 2 ½ Mile Road Interchange Concept 12c. It would be between Fort Hall Reservation and Tyhee community, small farm town with school and a few homes.
11. The City of Chubbuck plans to extend sewer service north to Siphon Road, and then eventually to Tyhee Road. Future housing developments will likely occur along that path. Since those homes are further to the west, those people would likely travel down to Philbin Road or to the Chubbuck interchange. Concept 14 (Siphon Road) is the best choice because it blends the best with the current growth pattern of developments toward the north of Pocatello and Chubbuck. Concept 13 (Tyhee) is also a good choice, but would not pick up as much traffic growth as the Siphon Road (Concept 14). 2 ½ Mile Road is too far from the population growth. The Chubbuck Road choices would put too much traffic on Chubbuck Road. As development continues to the north and west, Chubbuck Road would be too congested.
12. Sandra Lee Frank – I think the study has been done very effectively and professionally, who knows better than the professional engineers, not the politicians. Have you considered moving Siphon Road (building a new road) to the north of Siphon Road to avoid the buildings and the siphon pipe? After checking out the different sites it is quite obvious that Siphon Road really meets the need. But, this needs a “top priority” from our dear sweet politicians because with the projected 56% in population in the very near future, we don't want the Siphon Road site to be sold & lost to the interchange due to development. Let's get the land bought and move with the project, nothing will get cheaper as time goes on.

13. Arby Saunders – No (issues or concerns ITD should address in the Environmental Study).
14. Donald Hulse – Long range planning, Tyhee exchange looks the best to me. Siphon is second choice and Chubbuck would be third. There is enough traffic from the Highland area coming down Chubbuck Road.
15. Glen S. Marshall – My choice is Tyhee Road. Reasons: 1) move traffic farthest from the existing Y and Chubbuck Rd. 2) feeds traffic to Yellowstone Highway and adjacent to land which is zoned and building light industrial – (land bordered by Yellowstone, Tyhee Rd., Highline Rd & Siphon Rd.). Siphon Rd. would also serve the above reasons except the under-road irrigation siphon would be difficult to maintain and negotiate with BIA, and it would be one mile closer to existing traffic counts.
16. Jan Flandro – I prefer plans #13 and #14 because of the scoring on the Evaluation Matrix (Level 2). I do not want #11 or #16 because of the number of red dots (least effective) on the Evaluation Matrix. Also, the Chubbuck Road interchanges are too close to the “Y” and Chubbuck Road is the access road between Highland High School and Chubbuck.
17. Gene H. Adams – Siphon Road or 2½ Mile Road would be good. I would like to see some of the traffic from Yellowstone to the I-15.
18. Gale Y. Anderson – This (*Tyhee Rd, Concept 13.*) is a very good choice, and the only good choice.
19. Betsy Nickels – I assigned numerical values (1-5) to the green and red symbols on the evaluation matrix (See attached). Presuming the matrix is accurate, the rankings from best to worst are: 1) Siphon Rd. (see next pg.) (w/ 80 pts); 2) Tyhee Rd. (w/ 62); No Build (w/ 60); 4) 2½ Mile Rd. (w/ 59); 5) Chubbuck Rd. #11 (w/56); 6) Chubbuck Rd. #16 (w/54). I was dismayed to see Siphon Rd. get the most points. I live in the 200 block of West Siphon Rd., and existing traffic volume is very high. The road is already a truck route. The posted speed limit is 30 mph, which is ignored. Also, the “Siphon Tube” under/near (or whatever) the road (for which it was named, probably) is already leaking, probably partly due to the weight/repeated vibrations of the multi-axle trucks using Siphon Rd. Widening is impossible due to the closeness of residences on the street. Your values for “noise,” “safety” and “impact on known resources” need to be changed drastically. 2½ Mile Rd. is the least developed now; therefore, the purchase price of the land needed would be the least. Even in 5-10 yrs, when this is built, 2½ Mile will still not be as populated as the other choices are now.
20. Kent Yost – A) Would you address the criteria used in your Evaluation matrix in which you concluded under Route Circulation (Transportation Benefits) that: Siphon Rd. (#14) is the “most” effective concept but that – Tyhee Rd (#13) is the “least” effective concept. B) The Tyhee Concept (#13) – a) moves the interchange far enough north to utilize the growth that will occur in North Bannock County when the sewer system opens future development; b) eliminates the need to work around infrastructure in place on Siphon, i.e. the irrigation improvements. I fear that if you proceed at Siphon Rd., the timing will be greatly delayed – perhaps the interchange will never be built – if you have to coordinate with the tribes. C) Consider future development impacts associated with a “North Bannock Co.” sewer. You might touch base with Steve Smart.
21. Lyle Jensen – The difficulty in developing sewer along Siphon makes the Tyhee Rd. attractive as an interchange to the community – although I favor Siphon over the two. The BLA makes Siphon very difficult. The North Bannock Co. sewer system to the Tyhee-Ft. hall area is a consideration needing attention in this interchange – We in Tyhee need this interchange ASAP along Siphon Rd. If the people and environmentalists would fade off into the sunset we could get our community to positive repair. We need to move in a positive direction for the good of all.
22. Kemper Marple – Living in North Chubbuck for many years and after studying the options offered at the meeting at the Portneuf District library, I believe Concept 13 is the

- most favorable choice. Considering the large housing area (supposed to be 1200 homes) north of 2½ Mile Rd. and other proposed stores and housing, the Tyhee Road connection to the Interstate and Bench Road would help relieve traffic flow in several areas in the next few years (8-10) for the Pine Ridge Mall and Wal-Mart area and others. Concepts 11 and 16: Too close to WYE to be considered. The proposed drawings seem too cluttered and use too much land.
23. Lavelle Rupp – As the major land owner (east of I-15) that will be affected by four (4) out of five (5) interchange concepts, we, as a family, would like to see the Siphon Road (Concept 14) be built over any of the other Concepts. There are a number of reasons why we feel that Siphon Road will be the best location over any of the other locations. 1) All of the landowners involved are in favor of Siphon Road. 2) There are fewer structures to be removed with Siphon Road. 3) Siphon road is the only road that crosses the Portneuf River to the west for any type of emergency bypass of Chubbuck or Pocatello. 4) Siphon road will have the lowest cost to build because of placement and location. 5) Siphon Road location will serve the public best because of the future growth of the City of Pocatello will take approximately 30-50 years to reach past the usage of Siphon road. 6) The residents of Chubbuck are more likely to use Siphon road as a by-pass to the congestion of I-86, within Chubbuck, than to driver farther north to Tyhee Road to go to the south by way of I-15. 7) All of the property involved with Siphon Road has been in our family for almost 100 years as farmland and has virtually no environmental concerns to deal with. 8) Siphon Road will disrupt our farming and irrigation system the least of any other location. 9) Land is not going to get any cheaper. There are many concerns with and problems with 2½ Mile Road and Tyhee Road Concepts that have not been addressed. 2½ Mile Road: 1) Simplot Waste Water Pond location (southeast); 2) Radio tower (northeast); 3) Slurry Pipeline (south and west to Tyhee Road); 4) Subdivision (northwest); 5) Geothermal wells (south and west); 6) Abandoned well (south and west); 7) New platted housing development (south and west); 8) Existing housing development (west of I-15 and south of 2½ Mile); 9) Too far north of the city limits to be effective for any future growth over the next 30-50 years. Tyhee Road: 1) Simplot Waste Water Pond (northeast); 2) Geothermal wells (northwest); 3) Underground spring (west of location); 4) Irrigation well (west of location); 5) New proposed and platted housing subdivision (northwest); 6) Houses to be removed (west of location); 7) Too far north of the city limits to be effective or any future growth over the next 30-50 years. Chubbuck Road: Chubbuck is too congested now for any more traffic. The traffic needs to be diverted around the City of Chubbuck for better traffic flow. As the major landowner (east of I-15) being affected by 4 out of 5 of the Concepts, I would like to be contacted and involved with any major decision-making. I would also like to be contacted and work with any environmental issues or questions concerning our property. Thank you.
24. Brent L. Frank, ITD Dist. Five Engineer (Retired) – After fifteen (15) years of discussions and studies the best and most feasible I.C. location, in my opinions, remains at Siphon Road. Pocatello and Chubbuck residential growth and development continues to build north on both the east and west of I-15. The largest portion of vehicles originating from the residential area east of I-15 desire to go west and south. If the new interchange is constructed too far north (Tyhee and 2½ Mile), people will not use it because of the out-of-direction travel to reach their desired destination. Siphon Road also appears to be far enough north that the WYE I.C. can be upgraded in the future and still provide sufficient Interstate traffic weaving operations between the two interchanges. Access to I-15 in the northern areas of both cities is needed now, so the Siphon Rd. I.C. should be given some priority and constructed within the next 10 years.
25. Floyd and Ruth Johnson – Siphon is probably the best, but a huge concern is what and how you would handle the siphon. It would have to be replaced, and that replacement



cost should be part of the cost of building the road and not the expense for the Fort Hall Water Project. We believe Siphon Rd. is the best option. Chubbuck Rd. would probably be too expensive. Most motorists would be going south to jobs and would not go 1-2 miles north to Tyhee or 2½ Mile Roads. Since “you” think the City of Chubbuck will grow to the Reservation Rd., the access to the Interstate would be most convenient in the middle of that growth instead of at its extremity to the north.